Team Teacher Reflection Manual

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Introduction

TTR offers teaching staff tools and support necessary to constructively deal with challenges and questions in a diverse classroom.

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Note

This file is a working draft.

TEAM TEACHER REFLECTION

Introduction

The Team Teacher Reflection (TTR) is part of the #IBelong-programme. #IBelong aims at improving the experiences and outcomes of students from diverse backgrounds in higher education through creating more inclusive learning environments in higher education. TTR is a guided set of immersive collaborative sessions designed for teacher teams (teachers of the same course programme), aimed at making teaching more inclusive and supportive of/for a diverse student body. TTR is an initiative that empowers teacher teams to develop their capacity and confidence to enable a diverse student population to engage, belong and learn successfully.

TTR is designed in such a way that:

• activities are distributed over the year to keep attention to sense of belonging throughout the year

• activities are integrated into regular staff meetings to make sessions as accessible as possible for teaching staff teams

TTR consists out of 3 to 4 sessions, depending on the local circumstances:

Introductory session: Towards a Frame of Reference for Sense of Belonging

45-60min

The implementation of this session is mandatory. The goal is to collect input for a Framework of Reference on Sense of Belonging for your Teacher Team, including a definition/statement on Sense of Belonging and 4 conditions to foster Sense of Belonging, formulated/written by members of the teacher team.

3 follow up meetings: Reflection on Sense of Belonging Cases

30min

The goal of these meetings is to expand the repertoire of staff to strengthen sense of belonging of a diverse group of students by reflecting on sense of belonging cases. In these cases, situations of first year students from your course programme, in which these students felt a lack of sense of belonging, are described. Members of the teacher team write a small report of each follow up meeting.

It is **key that members of the teacher team take the lead during this trajectory** (so-called Team Leads. They will formulate the Frame of Reference based on the Introductory Session, moderate the follow up meeting and produce the small reports based on these follow up meetings. This set up will enhance the ownership of the team. When someone from outside the team performs these tasks, the TTR will be considered as an external initiative and consequently will be placed outside daily practice of teachers.

In the following we will explain the sessions in detail.

Introductory session: Towards a Frame of Reference for Sense of Belonging

(45–60 min)

Preparatory assignment

A week before the session, participants are asked to think about the following questions and bring their answers:

- How would you define Sense of Belonging?

- What are, in your opinion, four conditions needed for ensuring student's Sense of Belonging at your faculty/course (programme)? (for instructor/facilitator: because we think that it is not too hard for participants to come up with two or three conditions, we ask for four conditions to push their creative thinking.)

In the medium-term we expected that (i) staff would make changes to their teaching and support to make it more relevant to students; and (ii) that students would be more engaged with their learning and (iii) have a stronger sense of belonging. We have evidence that these outcomes are being achieved. In the longer-term we expect this to contribute to improve retention and attainment.

Introductory session: Towards a Frame of Reference for Sense of Belonging	
Time Table	5 minutes: intro
	10 minutes: defining sense of belonging
	30 minutes: formulating 4 conditions for sense of belonging
	10 minutes: finalizing 4 conditions for sense of belonging
	5 minutes: wrap-up
	Programme outline
Introduction	**Background #IBelong**
	Offer (evidence based) context for this Team Teacher Reflection, so participants understand how this session relates to the wider context of #IBelong:
	#IBelong aims at improving the experiences and outcomes of students from diverse backgrounds through creating more inclusive learning environments in higher education.
	Three pillars of interventions towards a sense of belonging on the level of course programs:
	• Dialogue Days
	• Team Teacher Reflection
	• Student Community Mentoring

Programme outline

Goal session
Proceed with explaining the goal of this session:
Discuss input for a Framework of Reference on Sense of Belonging for your Teacher Team, formulated by members of your team, by:

Defining key concepts for sense of belonging

Formulating 4 Conditions to ensure students' sense of belonging at the course (program) of the participants

Programme outline

Personal interpretations
Invite participants to share their personal interpretations of sense of belonging in their professional context. It is important to formulate an own definition or statement of sense of belonging as a team, because the team will be the owner of this definition or statement. A question you can pose to help them get started is:

Referring to the preparatory assignment: what is your definition of students' Sense of Belonging? For participants who didn't prepare: Thinking about students' Sense of Belonging, what key concepts pop up in your mind?

Discussion
Based on the input of the participants, if time allows, ask them to elaborate on their interpretations.

Summary
Write down the key concepts mentioned and summarize the outcomes. If possible, address similarities and differences between their interpretations.

	Programme outline
Formulating 4 conditions for sense of belonging	**Exercise** After summarizing the definitions for sense of belonging, the next step is to discuss how the participants can ensure and nurture these elements they themselves have described. Invite them to reflect on this by sharing 4 conditions they feel are important to create and foster sense of belonging for their students (prepared teachers already formulated 4 conditions). Explain the reflections will take in 3 rounds: • Individual reflection • Small group reflection • Plenary reflection **Individual reflection** Give the individual participants 3–4 minutes to reflect on the key concepts mentioned by relating them to the 4 conditions the formulated in the preparatory assignment. (in case participants did not do the preparatory assignment: individual participants can use the 3–4 minutes to write down the 4 conditions they feel are important to ensure and nurture sense of belonging based on the key concepts mentioned.) **Small group reflection** Divide the group into small groups of 2–3 participants and ask them to come up with a list of 4 conditions, based on their individual reflections. If they are aligned in their views, it can be easy to identify the similarities and come up with conditions they all agree with. If they have different ideas about the conditions, the challenge is to come to a formulation of conditions that reflects all of their perspectives.
	Programme outline
Finalizing 4 conditions for sense of belonging	**Plenary reflection** Bring the group back together and invite them to share their 4 conditions. Based on the input of the participants, see if you can find a common thread in their input that you can summarize in 4 conditions. Write this down and check with the participants if they agree with these final 4 conditions. **Note for facilitators** Take the number of 4 in relation to the conditions as a guideline. If the participants come up with 3 or 5, that's ok too.

	Programme outline
Wrap-up	**Follow-up steps** 3 follow up meetings in which participants reflect on Sense of Belonging cases. Participants will organize these 30-minutes meetings themselves during regular meetings. A member of the teaching staff is moderator.
	Programme outline
Concrete output	The Team Leads produce a small Frame of Reference document (half or one page) that contains a) the team's definition of Sense of Belonging and b) 4 conditions to create and foster sense of belonging for their students. This document will be shared with members of the teacher team.

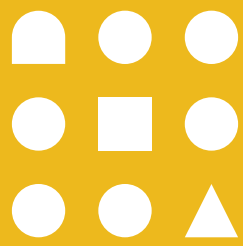# 3 follow-up meetings: Reflections on Sense of Belonging Cases

(30min)

- The follow-up meetings will be organized by members of the teaching team. The meetings will take place during regular meetings and will be moderated by a team member.

- The reflections in these meetings are on cases of first year students' experiences, collected by community mentors, or on cases brought up by teachers. The cases are described along the lines of the following questions:

a. What was the issue in the case?
b. Who were involved in the case?
c. How did the teacher behave and react to the issue?
d. How did the student behave and react to the issue?
e. How did others (peers, other teaching staff) behave and react to the issue?
f. What did the issue mean for the sense of belonging of the student?

In every meeting one case will be discussed. The teaching team can decide if a case is distributed before the meeting as preparatory reading, or to hand out the case during the meeting. We recommend distributing the case as preparatory reading, in order to maximize the reflection time during the meeting.

Follow-up meetings: Reflections on Sense of Belonging Cases	
Time Table	10 minutes: Inventory 15 minutes: reflection 5 minutes: formulating action points
	Programme outline
Inventory	Share what teacher team members have done to improve sense of belonging since the last meeting based on a) the Frame of Reference of Sense of Belonging and/or b) the case discussed in the last meeting?
Reflection	Introduce the case and reflect on the case through the following question: how can we deal with this case using the Frame of Reference of Sense of Belonging as discussed in the Introductory TTR session?
Action points	Formulate action points by answering the following question: which concrete follow-up steps will we take to solve this case and to improve students' sense of belonging?
Concrete output	After every follow-up meeting Team Leads will write a small report of the meeting to share with members of the teacher team.

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